

PRINT

Close

Sponsored by:

CQ TODAY ONLINE NEWS

Oct. 16, 2009 – 11:40 a.m.

## Gingrich Steps Up For GOP in Special Election

By Emily Cadei, CQ-Roll Call

Republican heavy hitters are stepping up for the party's New York special election candidate, after a poll this week showed the GOP in danger of losing that House seat.

On Friday, former House Speaker and Republican icon Newt Gingrich announced his endorsement of New York Assemblywoman [Dede Scozzafava](#), who is trailing Democrat [Bill Owens](#) in a tight three-way race to succeed nine-term GOP Rep. [John M. McHugh](#).



McHugh vacated the seat to become secretary of the Army.

The Republican National Committee also confirmed Friday that it was making a six-figure transfer to the state Republican Party to help with that race.

The RNC is also giving \$85,000 to the state party, the maximum allowed for a coordinated campaign, and has two staffers on the ground in the district.

In a letter to supporters, Gingrich called the Nov. 3 special election “an important test” for the party in advance of the 2010 mid-term election. Scozzafava is “Our best chance to put responsible and principled leaders in Washington,” he said.

Gingrich, who also [voiced his support](#) for Scozzafava at a GOP event last week in New York City, listed off a number of the candidate's conservative credentials, including her endorsement by the National Rifle Association, the fact that she signed the Americans for Tax Reform's Taxpayers' Protection Pledge and her opposition to the Democrat's health care overhaul proposal.

Gingrich did not mention it, but his appeal was clearly targeted at those Republican voters leaning towards voting for accountant [Doug Hoffman](#), who is running on the Conservative Party line.

Hoffman has capitalized on the backlash among local and national conservative groups, who have strongly objected to her centrist record in the Assembly. She voted in support of gay marriage and of the 2008-09 state budget pushed by Democratic Govs. Eliot Spitzer and [David A. Paterson](#), and favors some abortion rights.

Conservative advocacy groups including the Club for Growth, Citizens United and New York State Right to Life PAC are all backing Hoffman.

In a [Siena College poll](#) released Thursday, Hoffman received 23 percent of the vote, including significant portions of the independent and GOP electorate.

Hoffman's performance helped Owens pull ahead of Scozzafava by a statistically significant four point margin, after trailing her by seven percentage points two weeks ago.

The GOP hope to convince conservative voters that a vote for Hoffman is a vote for the Democrats.

CQ-ROLL CALL GROUP  
**FORUM**

**The Role of Natural Gas in the New Energy Economy**

Co-sponsored by:

**AGA** *American Gas Foundation*

Tuesday, Feb. 9 | [Click to register.](#)

CQ © 2007 All Rights Reserved | Congressional Quarterly Inc. 1255 22nd Street N.W. Washington, D.C. 20037 | 202-419-8500